

21. A purified polypeptide comprising an amino acid sequence selected from the group consisting of:

- MD3
- a) an amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1,
  - b) a naturally-occurring amino acid sequence having at least 90% sequence identity to the sequence of SEQ ID NO:1,
  - c) a biologically-active fragment of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1, and
  - d) an immunogenic fragment of the amino acid sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

22. An isolated polypeptide of claim 21, having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

23. An isolated polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide of claim 21.

24. An isolated polynucleotide encoding a polypeptide of claim 22.

25. An isolated polynucleotide of claim 24, having a sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

26. A recombinant polynucleotide comprising a promoter sequence operably linked to a polynucleotide of claim 23.

27. A cell transformed with a recombinant polynucleotide of claim 26.

28. A method for producing a polypeptide of claim 21, the method comprising:

- C
- a) culturing a cell under conditions suitable for expression of the polypeptide, wherein said cell is transformed with a recombinant polynucleotide, and said recombinant polynucleotide comprises a promoter sequence operably linked to a polynucleotide encoding the polypeptide of claim 21, and
  - b) recovering the polypeptide so expressed.

RECEIVED

MAY 03 2000

TECH CENTER 1600/2900

29. A method of claim 28, wherein the polypeptide has the sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.
30. An isolated antibody which specifically binds to a polypeptide of claim 21.
31. An isolated polynucleotide comprising a sequence selected from the group consisting of:
- a) a polynucleotide sequence of SEQ ID NO:2,
  - b) a naturally-occurring polynucleotide sequence having at least 90% sequence identity to the sequence of SEQ ID NO:2,
  - c) a polynucleotide sequence complementary to a),
  - d) a polynucleotide sequence complementary to b) and
  - e) a ribonucleotide equivalent of a)-d).
32. An isolated polynucleotide comprising at least 60 contiguous nucleic acids of claim 31.
33. A method for detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 31, the method comprising:
- a) hybridizing the sample with a probe comprising at least 20 contiguous nucleotides comprising a sequence complementary to said target polynucleotide in the sample, and which probe specifically hybridizes to said target polynucleotide, under conditions whereby a hybridization complex is formed between said probe and said target polynucleotide or fragments thereof, and
  - b) detecting the presence or absence of said hybridization complex, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.
34. A method of claim 33, wherein the probe comprises at least 60 contiguous nucleotides.
35. A method for detecting a target polynucleotide in a sample, said target polynucleotide

having a sequence of a polynucleotide of claim 31, the method comprising:

- a) amplifying said target polynucleotide or fragment thereof using polymerase chain reaction amplification, and
- b) detecting the presence or absence of said amplified target polynucleotide or fragment thereof, and, optionally, if present, the amount thereof.

36. A pharmaceutical composition comprising an effective amount of a polypeptide of claim 21 and a pharmaceutically acceptable excipient.

37. A pharmaceutical composition of claim 36, wherein the polypeptide has the sequence of SEQ ID NO:1.

38. A method for screening a compound for effectiveness as an agonist of a polypeptide of claim 21, the method comprising:

- a) exposing a sample comprising a polypeptide of claim 21 to a compound, and
- b) detecting agonist activity in the sample.

39. A method for screening a compound for effectiveness as an antagonist of a polypeptide of claim 21, the method comprising:

- a) exposing a sample comprising a polypeptide of claim 21 to a compound, and
- b) detecting antagonist activity in the sample.

40. A method for screening a compound for effectiveness in altering expression of a target polynucleotide, wherein said target polynucleotide comprises a sequence of claim 24, the method comprising:

- a) exposing a sample comprising the target polynucleotide to a compound, and
- b) detecting altered expression of the target polynucleotide.